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WHEN we consider the Instability and various Casualties of this frail Life, the Propensity and inordinate Desires of Mankind in the Pursuit of unlawful Pleasures, we are often led by our generous Nature to pity the Calamities of those, that precipitately, and without a previous Consideration, run into some Errors, which are not intentionally the Purpose of wilful Design: Yet when any Person, through the unaccountable Sallies of his unbounded Ambition, Avarice, and Self-Interest, shall endeavour to undermine the wholesome Constitution

stitution, to invade the Liberty and Property of a flourishing Nation, we cannot (in Justice to our selves) but look upon his Actions with Horror and Indignation, and conceive him to be no other than a common Nuisance to the whole Community. And whereas his high Station, his Post of Profit and Grandeur, may screen him a while from the just Vengeance of an oppress'd and injur'd People, yet certainly he cannot always enjoy that inward Peace of Mind, which is generally the Effect of good and laudable Actions,

The Character of *Phocion*, that brave and generous *Athenian*, in refusing the immense Riches, and the advantagious Offers of *Harpalus* and *Alexander*, stands fair in the Register of future Annals; that Action indicates him to be both an uncorrupt Statesman, and a Patriot of his native Country; But when shall this latter Age produce such an upright Man? We cannot find a *Democritus* to boast (when the ungrateful *Athenians*, out of a Pique, demolish'd his Statues) that they could not extinguish those pyramidical Virtues, that were the Motives to raise them. Happy had it been for us at this Time, if our Ministry, could boast of so much Honour and Honesty.

Virtue

Virtue is the Tenure by which we hold of Heaven; without this we are but Outlaws, which cannot claim a Protection. I wish our modern Statesmen could prove, that they retained any one Branch in all their Actions of that moral and excellent Attribute; but alas! what do we wish for? the meaner People are grown displeased, whilst the great ones lord it over them, and triumph in their Calamity. It is now accounted Treason to write or talk against some, who are only conspicuous for their Crimes, and who daily screen themselves (under the Umbrage of Sovereign Power) from the just Clamours of an injur'd Nation. They are become a second *Sejanus*, who (when he had with Impunity, for a considerable Time, attempted to ruin the wholesome Constitution of *Rome*, that great and flourishing City) resolv'd, by an unparallel'd and perpetrated Piece of Villainy, to evade the Law, by bringing into the Senate an Act of Indemnity, which, when confirm'd by the Royal Signet, would prove a sufficient Security for him and his Adherents.

But Justice overtook him in the Chase; he became both a miserable Object, and

an Example to Futurity. Shall *Britain* then grow tardy in meditating a just Revenge? Must she always prove a Prey to the Avarice of indigent Statesmen? *Britain!* whose Glory rivals that of *Rome*, that was once the Idol of the neighbouring World, a Terror to her Enemies, and a safe Assylum to those distressed States and Kingdoms that courted her Alliance. But, through some unforeseen Accident, (I will not say Mismanagements) grown despicable, liable daily to the Insults of her implacable Enemies, and tributary to every petty mercenary Prince.

O *Britain!* that once blest'd and happy State,
 The Darling of the Stars, and Heav'n's Care,
 Once all the bord'ring World thy Vassals were,
 And thou at once their Envy and their Fear;
 How art thou grown degenerate,
 Become the Tennis-ball of Fate,
 The certain Object of Mens Mirth and Hate.

Is it possible that *Spain* can forget already the repeated Successes of a late glorious War, when the Imperial Crown lay tottering on their Monarch's Head? is he now grown insensible that he was once obliged to some hungry Ministers for his Diadem, when *France* would have agreed to

to a separate Treaty, and had left him to the Mercy, and at the Discretion of the *British* Allies; and that he was necessitated to resign by a free and voluntary Act, (if we may term a fatal Necessity the Intention of a willing Mind;) *Sardinia* and *Sicily* to the Emperor, and the Duke of *Savoy*, his Acquisitions in *Italy*, with the *Spanish Netherlands*, to the *Imperialists*, and the Island of *Minorca*, with *Gibraltar* to the *English* Nation, to purchase a Peace at any Rate, from the Indulgence of that Kingdom, that is now become so contemptible in their Eyes? Certain I am, they never durst attempt such unwarrantable and such unprecedented Actions, if they were not confident they had, by some indirect and sinister Means, secur'd the Friendship of some mercenary People, whose Interest it is to overlook their Hostilities, and their Depredations in the *Indies*.

I cannot imagine what could induce them to endeavour to embroil *Europe* in the general Calamities of unnecessary War, when they have not the least Grounds for any just Complaint, without we attribute the Cause to their unbounded Ambition, and a Desire to have *Gibrak*

tar once more in their Hands, whereby they might have it in their Power to embarrals our Navigation, and ruin our Trade to the *Indies*. The *Streights* are a Key to the *Mediterranean*; the *Spaniards* have *Ceuta* in *Africa*, and if they likewise had *Gibraltar*, they would so effectually secure that narrow Passage, that at a small Expence they might easily prevent our Sailing that Way, without running the Nation to the continual Charge of a Naval Force, a considerable Squadron of Men of War, to convoy them beyond their Reach, and the Apprehension of any Danger from those Quarters.

Yet there were not wanting some honest Gentlemen, who (out of a natural Propensity to the Welfare and Happiness of their native Country) insinuate, that the Possession of that important Fortrefs was not worth the Expence of maintaining it; and that at best it was but a Nuisance, and a superfluous Expence; a second *Tangier*. I would desire those Worthies of an adulterate Age to inform me, whether they entertain'd the same Sentiments, when it was at first, together with *Port Mahon* and its Districts, by a voluntary Concession, granted the *English* by the

the Treaty of *Utrecht*; or whether the Influence of the *Spanish* Pistoles has not wrought upon their Judgment, and refined their Understanding; for if *Gibraltar* at first was thought not worth our Acceptance, why did our Plenipotentiaries make such a Bustle at the Congress to have it assign'd? and why did the Nation run to the Expence of adding to its artificial, and improving its natural Fortifications, to render it, if possible, impregnable?

I have seen when Parents would have their peevish and froward Children part with any Thing that is valuable, they cry out *Pa-pa*, to inform their Infant Understanding, that the Thing they so eagerly coveted was not worth retaining, and that their rating it to be of an inconsiderate Value has made them part with it, without any Remorse, Regret, or Reluctance: It may be, that those worthy Patriots having, in a Succession of Years in their Administration of Affairs experimentally found, that Activity and that Constancy, that Judgment and Understanding of our Ancestors, (which rais'd the Glory and Reputation of this Nation to that Crisis, that contending

Parties courted our Friendship) is now in so declining a Condition, that we are grown senseless, and so stupid, that they can easily impose on our credulous Nature, and make us believe what their Interest may prompt them to assert; or, that they have involv'd themselves so far in the *Spanish* Interest, that they cannot disengage nor extricate themselves out of the Labyrinth, without the Hazard of their Lives and Fortunes.

And whereas *Spain* had Reason to hope (if there be any real Dependance, and the repeated Words, and the solemn Assurances of Mankind) that *Gibraltar* should be restor'd, and, upon that Account, that the *Spaniards* were prevail'd on to besiege it formally, that a voluntary Surrender might be contrued a real Necessity, and the Nation be infatuated to suggest it was taken by Force; yet when frustrated in their Designs, which was so expensive to them, and their Expectations render'd abortive, by the prudent Measures and the Resolutions of his Most Sacred Majesty, their Friends, in a certain Climate, were at a Loss (for Fear of having the melancholy Scene laid open, and their becoming the necessary Object of the

the People's Hatred and Contempt) to recompense them for the immense Sums of Money, which that unsuccessful Attempt had cost, and the Loss of a well-disciplin'd Army, otherwise than by condescending to wink at their Depredations, pyratrical Captures, and unjust Proceedings, and to suffer them, by Degrees, to ruin that valuable Branch of our Commerce, our Trade to the *Indies*.

Our Trade is the sole and principal Support of our Land; it is to our Commerce that we owe our Wealth, our Grandeur, and our Prosperity; it is the main Spring to which the Machine of our Government moves, and which has cost our industrious Ancestors much Pains and Labour to cultivate and improve, and may, methodically speaking, be look'd upon as the *Summum bonum*. What signifies the small Consumption of our Woollen Manufacture at home? it is a meer Trifle to what is expended abroad by our Traffick, and the Returns both beneficial and of great Utility to the Publick; that Branch of our Trade employs Thousands of poor People, as Combers, Spinsters, Weavers, &c. which being abridg'd, the greatest Part of the meaner Sort

Sort must inevitably starve; for *Sublatur causa tollitur effectus*, when Poverty becomes Epidemical, farewell Glory, farewell Empire. Therefore he that by amassing of Riches endeavours to impoverish a Nation, (for Riches surreptitiously and illegally acquired, must, of consequence, be a mighty Trespass on the Publick) can justly be deem'd no other, than a Traytor to his Sovereign and the Community, seeing the Interest of the Prince and the Welfare of his People are reciprocal, and that the Glory and Grandeur of a Monarch is never more conspicuous, than in the Wealth and Happiness of his People.

I have heard it confidently reported, that the Death of Admiral *Hosier* was chiefly attributed to his being sent on that frivolous Errand to the *West Indies*. He was a Gentleman of excellent Courage and Conduct; he was a Man of too capacious a Soul to bear to be sent with a *British* Squadron into those Seas with his Sword pad-lock'd in his Scabbord, when he had an Opportunity to exert himself in his Country's Cause, and to revenge the Violence and Injuries done to the *British* Nation: He wanted to be an Actor, not a Spectable; he was satisfied

fied the Fleet was equipp'd, victual'd, and mann'd at no small Expence to *Great Britain*, and that the Generality of the People expected to have some Account from the Performance of so brave a Man, answerable to the heavy Charge the Nation was at, which must of consequence encrease the Publick Debts, lessen his Reputation, and be an Encouragement to the Insolence of the *Spaniards*, who had already begun Hostilities, and by seizing and securing our Merchant-Ships in their several Harbours in the *Indies*, made it demonstrable, that they neither valued our Friendship, or fear'd our just Revenge.

I have seen a Paragraph of one of the *Journalists*, wherein he avers, that the Losses sustain'd in the *Indies*, were principally owing to the Inactivity of our Merchant-Men; but whether that Assertion did not savour more of Interest than Probability, a Vindication of the Conduct of the Ministers of State, than an Instance of Verity, I leave to the Consideration of every judicious and disinterested *Briton*; for whereas the Captains of such Vessels had no Commissions from the Board of Admiralty, no Orders
from

from the Government to make Reprimands, they could not legally justify any Action that tended to the Detriment of the *Spaniards*, and could in Reality be looked upon no otherways than as *Piratical Crews*, to commit Hostilities without a lawful Authority.

And whereas the *Spaniards* formally agreed to a Suspension of Hostilities, and executed Preliminary Articles by raising the Siege of *Gibraltar*, it is the Opinion of most People, that their Behaviour and their Actions carry'd those extensive Views, that our wisest Politicians were not able to penetrate into their Designs. We may draw this necessary Inference from their Conduct ever since, that they wanted their Galleons home; the immense Treasure on Board was too valuable to be left to the Mercy and at the Direction of a *British* Squadron, therefore prudently consented to suspend for a while their inveterate Hatred and their Resentments, to have it in their Power, when Time and Opportunity serv'd, to exert themselves (their Coffers being replenish'd) with that Vigour and Resolution, in Concert with their Allies, which the Posture of their Affairs requir'd.

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The *Dayly Journal* of the 8th Instant avers, that we are in a prosperous and flourishing Condition: In order to prove his Assertion, he gives us a long Detail of some particular Advantages from the Improvement of Trade, and the vast Consumption of our Staple-Manufactures both at home and abroad; that the Farmers live better and save more Money than ever they did these 200 Years past; that the barrenest Parts of the Country have been cultivated and improved, and that though we generally pay a good Price for Lead, yet by a skilful and frugal Management, the Yeomen and Farmers reap considerable Advantages from the Fruits of their Labour for Ages past; but this is only repeating what we are already sensible of; this does not prove that our Trade abroad is improved, or that there are greater Imports of those valuable foreign Commodities, for which we barter our Manufactures, the natural Product of our Native Countries, which may aptly be termed the Wealth and flourishing State of the Nation.

We expected when the Congress was opened at *Soissons*, that there would be a speedy Conclusion, a final Determination
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of all Differences and Disputes ; but Time and a fatal Experience demonstrate, that the Allies of the Treaty of *Vienna* only trifle with our Sincerity and honest Integrity, and prey upon our Necessities, to force us to accept of their Terms, or oblige us to have Recourse to Arms for our own Justification, and our Security. They accede, recede, grant and retract, in a Breath ; one while they seem inclin'd to Peace, and strait have an Aversion to a general Tranquility ; so fickle are they in their Dispositions, that they have spun out the Time which we supposed would terminate all Differences, to such an unexpected Length, that they give us little Hopes of an Accommodation.

As for my Part, I can see no just Reason why we should suffer those Indignities from Galleyo's, a Parcel of rascally and faint-hearted Poltroons, that are more adapted to Compliments, than Verity, Honour, Honesty, or Morality. Perhaps their Plenipo's are Men of greater Sagacity, of sounder penetrating Judgments than ours are, and that they think it below their Dignity to treat with Men of neither Station nor Quality. If this be
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the Case, certainly those People that had a Hand in the Nomination of such to a Congress, whither the Politeft of Mankind are sent to take Care of the Interest of their respective Kingdoms and States, had a greater Regard to their own private Views, than for the Welfare, and Happiness, and the Reputation of the Generality of the Nation.

I have seen when two noted Footmen have been appointed to run a Race, he that had the best Heels used frequently to dally with the other, being satisfy'd he could out-strip him, when he pleas'd. I will not say there is an Analogy between the Head and the Heels, otherwise than that they are vital Parts, assign'd for the Circulation of the Blood, yet we may draw this Parallel, that as they are not Men of the most profound Judgment, exalted Genius, a regular and superior Understanding, the Rest of the Plenipotentiaries only trifle with them, to lead them into that Labyrinth, from whence they cannot extricate themselves without much Labour and Difficulty. Since then we are inadvertently drawn into a Dilemma, our only Hopes are center'd in the personal Courage and Conduct of his Most Sacred Majesty, who has nothing more at Heart than the Ease and Prosperity of his People, and therefore would willingly have them enjoy the Fruits of a settled Tranquillity; yet whereas he has declar'd in his most Gracious Speech from the Throne, That an Exchange may easily be
made

made, when Time and Opportunity serves, we have this Confidence in his Princely Virtues, that he will inform their Sagacity, That we have not altogether forgot our innate Courage and Resolution, and that *Nemo nos impune laceffit.*

I have read of a certain Statesman in *France*, that by indirect Means, Fraud, and Extortion, had amass'd much Wealth, had laid out vast Sums of Money on erecting sumptuous and costly Edifices, the very Furniture of which had cost him more than his hereditary Patrimony was worth: The King being inform'd by some of his faithful Subjects of the Pride, Ambition, Avarice, and illegal Actions of this upstart Favourite, order'd an impartial Enquiry to be made (by Commissioners appointed for that Purpose) into the Effects of this unjust Steward, and being inform'd, by their Report, of the Verity of the heavy Charge against him, and Circumstances being fully stated and prov'd, as an Aggravation of his Guilt, his Great, Good, and Just Sovereign order'd him to be dragg'd forthwith to publick Execution, and to have his Estate, real and personal, confiscated and sold, and the Money arising from such a Sale to be distributed amongst the People, to make up the Losses sustain'd by his Administration. Thus fell that Minister, unpity'd and unlamented, as a Pattern to future Ages, for his Exactions and Extortions. Happy had it been for us, if the same laudible Example was imitated in *Great Britain*; for it is evident, that all the mighty Struggles between contending Parties is for Places of Profit and Interest, which having once acquir'd, a few Years raises an indigent Statesman to the highest Pitch of Grandeur and Glory.

F I N I S.



